

**HOW WILL MY PERMIT CHANGE AS DEQ UPDATES CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
GENERAL VARIANCE CATEGORIES? Version 4**

START. Circa 2016, facilities are:

1. Meeting standards (or have compliance schedule to do so)
2. Meeting General Variance (or have compliance schedule to do so)
3. Meeting individual Variance (or have compliance schedule to do so)

3-Year Review: For each category, DEQ evaluates if more cost-effective and efficient phosphorus and nitrogen removal technologies are available that can be applied at the statewide scale (**ENDNOTE 1**)

DEQ reviews the General Variance categories every 3 years

Does 3-year review indicate there are more cost-effective & efficient nutrient-removal technologies for a category?

NO

YES

Carry forward to next 3-year review

Apply for an Individual Variance

(ENDNOTE 2)

Variance no longer required

DEQ updates General Variance Treatment level(s) for one or more categories.

Am I required to meet the updated General Variance treatment levels? YES, UNLESS:

- 1) It's too costly
- 2) Facility moves to a zero waste load allocation (non-discharge in summer)
- 3) Upstream assimilative capacity allows facility to remain at current treatment level because standard is met
- 4) Approved TMDL concluded that facility is an insignificant nutrient loading source (**ENDNOTE 3**)
- 5) Upgrade to new General Variance treatment level would not result in a net environmental improvement and progress towards attaining the standard

Remain at Previous General Variance Treatment Level. Discharger is not required to upgrade facility beyond the *previous* General Variance level. Situation in the watershed must be monitored over time to see if statement 5 in previous box remains true. (If this was DEQ's first change to the Gen. Variance level since 2016, the discharger would remain at 2016 level.)

(ENDNOTE 4)

ENDNOTES

(1) Further details regarding what will be considered for the triennial review are in Section 2.0, Circular DEQ-12 Part B.

(2) Rules regarding what is required to receive an individual variance are in NEW RULE I (2)(3) and (4). Further information is found in Section 3.0, Circular DEQ-12 Part B, and in Sections 1.0 through 3.0 in the guidance document *“Carrying out a Substantial and Widespread Economic Analysis for Individual Nutrient Standards Variances AND Guidelines for Determining if a Waste Water Treatment Facility Can Remain at a Previous General Variance Concentration”*.

(3) Rules pertaining to a determination in a TMDL that a facility is an insignificant nutrient load are found in NEW RULE I (7).

(4) Rules regarding what is required to remain at a previous general-variance concentration are in NEW RULE I (6) and (6a). Further information can be found in Section 2.2, Circular DEQ-12 Part B, and in Section 4.0 of the guidance document *“Carrying out a Substantial and Widespread Economic Analysis for Individual Nutrient Standards Variances AND Guidelines for Determining if a Waste Water Treatment Facility Can Remain at a Previous General Variance Concentration”*.